

Virtual Care Consultation: New Draft Standard and FAQs

The Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario (RCDSO) is currently seeking feedback on its new draft Standard of Practice on Virtual Care (also known as “teledentistry”), which sets out the requirements that Ontario dentists must adhere to when:

- **assessing the appropriateness of virtual care;**
- **providing virtual care; and**
- **providing virtual care across borders.**

A separate resource, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Virtual Care, has also been developed as a companion to the Standard. The purpose of this document is to provide additional information and guidance regarding virtual care (e.g., on consultations and referrals, cross-border virtual care, and liability protection).

We are inviting feedback at this stage to help inform future revisions to the draft Standard and FAQs.

The following survey will ask you a few questions about the draft Virtual Care Standard and FAQs. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. You will be able to pause during the survey and restart at a later time if you wish.

If you would like to review the survey in advance, you can download a copy [here](#).

All survey responses will be reviewed. The identity of all individual respondents will be kept strictly confidential but organizational respondents will be identified as having responded in the Council meeting materials that are available publicly. A summary of the feedback received will be shared with RCDSO Committees and Council.

* 1. Are you a:

- Dentist (including retired)
- Dental student
- Member of the public
- Other health care professional (including retired)
- Representative from an organization (please specify the organization)

- Prefer not to say

Questions for dentists

Tell us about yourself and your practice.

* 2. What kind of dentist are you?

- General
- Specialist

3. If applicable, please specify your area of focus or specialty:

* 4. How would you describe your primary practice?

- Solo private practice
- Group private practice
- Hospital-based practice
- School-based practice
- Public health unit
- Academic/Administrative

Other (please specify)

* 5. Which of these describes the general area(s) where you practice? Please select all that apply:

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Remote
- Other (please specify)

6. If you provide dental care in your primary practice, in what languages do you provide care to your patients? You can list up to five languages.

* 7. Do you provide virtual care in your practice?

Virtual care may include, but is not limited to, the use of electronic information, imaging, communication, and patient engagement technology to provide and support dental care delivery remotely. Virtual care may be synchronous (e.g., live, two-way interaction using audio or video communication technology) or asynchronous (e.g., store-and-forward technology).

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

8. If applicable, please specify which dental service(s) you provide virtually:

* 9. Do you live in:

- Ontario
- Another province or territory in Canada
- Outside of Canada
- Prefer not to say

Questions for all respondents

The following question will ask you about terminology.

* 10. A number of terms may be used to describe the use of technology to provide and support dental care delivery remotely (e.g., virtual care, telehealth, teledentistry, teledental). The RCDSO has used the term “virtual care” in the draft Standard and FAQs and defined it as:

“including, but is not limited to, the use of electronic information, imaging, communication, and patient engagement technology to provide and support dental care delivery remotely. Virtual care may be synchronous (e.g., live, two-way interaction using audio or video communication technology) or asynchronous (e.g., store-and-forward technology)”.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
It is clear to me what the term "virtual care" refers to.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The term "virtual care" is broad enough to capture all of the relevant dental care that may be provided by dentists using this modality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The definition of "virtual care" is clear.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The definition of "virtual care" is comprehensive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Please feel free to elaborate (e.g., why you agree or disagree):

The following questions will ask you about some of the requirements in the draft Virtual Care Standard and the information in the FAQs.

* 12. The draft Standard sets out the circumstances in which the use of virtual care would be appropriate. Please indicate which draft requirements are clear, reasonable, and necessary (select all that apply).

	The draft requirement is clear	The draft requirement is reasonable	The draft requirement is necessary	All	None
Ontario dentists must use their professional judgement to determine whether virtual care is appropriate in each instance it is contemplated and will enable them to meet the standard of care and all applicable legal, professional, and ethical obligations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must identify the resources (e.g., technology, equipment, support people) that are required, and only proceed if those resources are available and can be used effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must consider the nature of the dental care required, including whether in-person, hands-on care is required in order to meet the standard of care, and only proceed if the dental care can be effectively delivered virtually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentist must consider the patient's existing health status, specific health-care needs, and specific circumstances and preferences, and only provide virtual care if it is in the patient's best interest and the potential benefits outweigh the risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Please feel free to elaborate:

* 14. The draft Standard sets out a number of requirements for Ontario dentists regarding the identification of the patient and dentist.

Please indicate which draft requirements are clear, reasonable, and necessary (select all that apply).

	The draft requirement is clear	The draft requirement is reasonable	The draft requirement is necessary	All	None
Ontario dentists must take reasonable steps to verify and authenticate the identity of the patient prior to collecting, accessing, using, or disclosing the patient's personal health information (PHI).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must confirm the current geographic location of the patient.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must disclose their own geographic location (e.g., city, province).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must disclose their identity to all <i>new</i> patients.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must disclose the jurisdiction(s) in which they are licensed to all <i>new</i> patients.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must disclose to all <i>new</i> patients whether in-person dental care is offered, and if so, the practice address.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Please feel free to elaborate:

* 16. The draft Standard states that in addition to obtaining valid consent for any treatment proposed, Ontario dentists must obtain consent for the delivery of care using a virtual modality, which will require providing information regarding the benefits, limitations, and potential risks of using the virtual modality, as well as any associated costs.

Review each of the statements below and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
It is clear that consent for using a virtual modality is separate from the consent to treatment process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is reasonable to require that Ontario dentists obtain patient consent for using a virtual modality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Please feel free to elaborate:

* 18. The draft Standard recognizes that virtual care may take place across borders and sets out requirements for Ontario dentists when the *dentist* is not geographically located in Ontario when providing virtual care. Review each of the draft requirements below and indicate whether the requirement is clear, reasonable, and necessary (select all that apply).

	The draft requirement is clear	The draft requirement is reasonable	The draft requirement is necessary	All	None
Ontario dentists must comply with any applicable licensing requirements of the jurisdiction where they are geographically located.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must comply with any applicable legal, professional, and ethical obligations for virtual care set out in that jurisdiction or in the RCDSO's Virtual Care Standard, whichever obligations are higher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must provide dental care in accordance with the highest standard of care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must ensure they have appropriate liability protection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. Please feel free to elaborate:

* 20. The draft Standard also sets out requirements for Ontario dentists when the *patient* is not geographically located in Ontario when care is delivered. Review each of the draft requirements below and indicate whether the requirement is clear, reasonable, and necessary (select all that apply).

	The draft requirement is clear	The draft requirement is reasonable	The draft requirement is necessary	All	None
Ontario dentists must comply with any applicable licensing requirements of the jurisdiction where the <i>patient</i> is geographically located.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must comply with any applicable legal, professional, and ethical obligations for virtual care set out in that jurisdiction or in the RCDSO's Virtual Care Standard, whichever obligations are higher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must provide dental care in accordance with the highest standard of care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ontario dentists must ensure they have appropriate liability protection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Please feel free to elaborate:

Draft Standard

The following questions will ask you about the draft Virtual Care Standard.

* 22. In order to answer the next few questions, it is necessary for you to have read the draft Standard. If you have not read the draft Standard, you will be skipped to the next set of questions; however, the answers you have provided to all previous questions will still be submitted.

If you would like, you may take a moment to read the draft Standard by clicking [here](#).

Have you read the draft Virtual Care Standard?

- Yes
- No

* 23. We'd like to understand whether the scope of the draft Standard is clear and reasonable. Review each of the statements below and indicate whether it is clear and reasonable (select all that apply).

	This is clear	This is reasonable	Both	Neither
The draft Standard only applies to Ontario dentists (i.e., members of the RCDSO).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The draft Standard does not apply to out-of-province dentists who provide virtual care to patients in Ontario.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The draft Standard only applies to interactions between patients and dentists.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The draft Standard does not apply to consultations between health care providers and referrals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Existing requirements for consultations and referrals are set out in RCDSO's Most Responsible Dentist Practice Advisory and Dental Recordkeeping Guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. Please feel free to elaborate:

* 25. We'd like to understand whether the draft Standard is clear and comprehensive. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The draft Standard is clearly written	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The draft Standard is easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The draft Standard is comprehensive and addresses all of the relevant or important issues related to virtual care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The draft Standard includes definitions of all essential terms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. Feel free to elaborate on your answers above. For example, how can we improve the clarity of the draft Standard? How can we make the draft Standard more comprehensive?

27. Does the draft Standard contain content or requirements that you feel are unnecessary and should be removed?

Draft FAQs

The following questions will ask you about the draft Virtual Care FAQs.

* 28. In order to answer the next few questions, it is necessary for you to have read the draft FAQs. If you have not read the draft FAQs, you will be skipped to the end of the survey; however, the answers you have provided to all previous questions will still be submitted.

If you would like, you may take a moment to read the draft FAQs by clicking [here](#).

Have you read the draft Virtual Care FAQs?

Yes

No

* 29. We'd like to understand whether the draft FAQs are clear and comprehensive. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The draft FAQs clearly written	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The draft FAQs are easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The draft FAQs are comprehensive and address all of the relevant or important issues related to virtual care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30. Feel free to elaborate on your answers above. For example, how can we improve the clarity of the draft FAQs? How can we make the draft FAQs more comprehensive?

31. Do the draft FAQs contain content that you feel is unnecessary and should be removed?

Any other feedback?

32. If you have any additional comments that you have not yet provided on the draft Standard or FAQs, please provide them below or by [email](#).

Thank you!

These are all the questions we have for you today. Once a final Standard has been approved by RCDSO Council, the Standard will be posted on the RCDSO's website. The RCDSO will also notify interested parties via social media and our online news source.